

LETTERS FROM THE Noblemen, Gentlemen, Justices, and Free-holders of the Shire of Fife, to the Lord General Monck.

With his Lordships Answer thereunto

May it please your Lordship,



Y^e call of your Letter, of the fifteenth of November last, We Noblemen, Gentlemen, Justices, and Freeholders of the Shire of Fife and Kinross, having met, and taking into our serious consideration the tenour and import thereof, both as to the grounds of your present undertaking, and the expressions of your favour & tendernes towards the Peace, Safety and Help of this (evenburdened and afflicted Nation). We hold it a duty incumbent upon us, humbly to represent your Lordship with this return. In the first place, we conceive ourselves bound to pay our thankfull acknowledgements of those many and great obligations you have put upon us, for the regard you have expressed of these crushing pressures which we have so long and vainly laboured under, and your care and readiness to interpose to ease the languishing (and now utterly expiring) condition of this poor Country, which cryeth out for relief. Next as we look upon it as a token for good, that the mercifull God, who can plead the cause of the oppressed, hath stirred your Lordship in this day of desperate extremity, to stand in the breach, to avert that impendent ruine of all that is precious, by asserting the Liberty and being of *Parliament* according to our ancient Constitutions, and a *Godly Ministry*, wherein our freedom & Rights (Religious and Civil) are bound up jointly with the Interest of *England and Ireland*. So we judge it to be the duty of all, as they are true-hearted Patriots and Christians, and bear a concern for their concerns in the weal or woe of publick Transactions, to own the Prosecution of those mentioned Ends, as the only direct and expedient, distinctly considerable beyond any other, for the lighting of the Evils we now feel, & prevention of those we fear, by giving the Government and Authority, which may rule in the hearts of men by *Love and Righteousness*, and not Tyranny over their Persons and Estates by *Force and Power*. For our parts, we have been spectators with sad bleeding hearts of the grievous breaches which by the Revolutions of late yeares have been made upon these Nations: And among all the pretenders to our Cause, we have found no healing Medicines, nor can we expect that our suffering wounds can be healed, and warring divisions closed by any *Human* or *Monetary* unchose way. The Gospel and the Interest of *Jesus Christ* should be (and we hope shall be) dearer to us than our lives, which we are sure cannot be preserved and maintained without a *Godly and learned Ministry*; our other concerns we must waive in these places, (The great preserve of men, who loveth and delighteth in righteous things, is the *L O R D alone*, upon whom we do fix our eyes) but according to what cometh within the compass of humane consideration, and the knowledge we might have acquired by dear-bought experience, when these personal and publick Interests, solemnly owned, may be best secured: So we do most unanimously bear our Testimony to the Equity and Justice of these Grounds you have professed; That we know, we can willingly own no later nor better means for restoring and preserving of all our dearest concerns, than by a *Parliament*, sitting in safety and honour, without any force or interruption, and capacitated for application of such comprehensive Remedies, as may reach the universall publick Maladies, and Distempers, and Persons, and procure the private benefit of singular men, and *several parties*, how considerable soever, onely so far as they advance the generall Interest and publick good of the Commonwealth. When we reflect upon the uncertain, torn, disjoynd and tottering condition, we are cast into by an Arbitrary Government, and the distracting Terrible, dismal Confusions, which are the usual attendants of a *Sword Power*; so that when it takes the Helm, it neither is, nor can be, the left hope of settled assurance of Life, Estate, Property, or any matter or thing whatsoever, but all must be contented in a reeling fluctuating estate, which at the long-run may prove destructive, even to those who promise to themselves greatest immunity: therefore if we shall expresse the belief and preservation of our hearts and souls, we must professe undoubtedly that we see not how this Island can have Remedy, Cure, and Deliverance, and Settlement to the satisfaction and content of sober men, till the elements be restored to their honour, freedom and safety, and we cannot be answerable to those Dictates, which Reason, Interest, and Duty and Engagements prompt unto us, if we do not unanimously concur and lay ourselves forth in our Nations for promoting and advancing this firm and sure settling way of a lasting Peace and Happinesse; in pursuance whereof, we do purpose and resolve by the help of God to preserve the peace and safety of this Country as we can; to give all countenance and encouragement to the godly Ministry, and faithfull in the Land, and so to dispose of our selves as we may attend your Lordships directions, and yield all due respects to your Commands from time to time, making our supplication, that the Supreme Disposer of all things, and the great God of Peace may put into the hearts of those who are now upon the Stage of Action; to improve their utmost interest & power for the preventing the effusion of blood, and incline them to pursue the just ways of peace and firm Settlement so much desired and longed for, which may be obtained with safety enough on all sides, and indemnity to all persons; the speedier and chearfull accomplishment whereof, we do verily believe is in the hearts & thirstings of all good people, save such who mind fears, jealousies, prejudices and advantages, more then the Common-good and Publick-safety, and care not though all perish and sink, so they may but keep themselves aloft, and swimming. We beg your Lordships pardon, that we have taken the liberty thus to express our Senses, Fears, Duties and Purposes, relating to the Affairs now in hand, and sh. I add no more, but that the only wise good God (if he hath yet such a Mercy for us) they make you a renowned Instrument for restoring three populous Nations after a long tedious storm, to that calm and felicity of Peacem a Settlement, to be transmitted and derived to our Posterities, that your fame and just praise for so noble and glorious Achievement may sound far and near, and never endingly continue.

Thus Prayeth;

Your Lordships most humble and
faithfull Servant,

General Monck's Answer.

For the Right Honourable, my
Lord General Monck
These
My Lords and Gentlemen;

I Received your Letter, and return you thanks for the large testimony of your Fidelity to the Commonwealth, and your good Affections to that Good Cause, in which we are now engaged. And do hereby assure you, that it shall be amongst the chiefest of my Care, to preserve you in peace and prosperity, and to defend and protect you from all dangers especially such as you may incur, by this your honest and chearfull expression of your well-wishes towards us: And to that end, I do Impower and Authorize the Noblemen, Gentlemen and Justices of Peace of your Counties, or any nine of them, with the Advice and consent of the Governour of the next adjacent Garrison, to put in execution such Orders and Commands as I shall have occasion to give, for securing the Peace of the Country; provided, the Noblemen, Gentlemen, and Justices be such as have subscribed to live peaceably, and to att nothing prejudicial to the Commonwealth of England; and that none of them be Papists: and I do allow, that such Noblemen and Gentlemen as have subscribed the Letter as aforesaid, shall have liberty (with Passes from me) to wear their Arms, and four Servants to be likewise armed, for the attendance of each Nobleman, and two for each Gentleman: and as you know of any other thing wherein I may be serviceable to you, I shall desire you to propound, with assurance of the utmost endeavours and furtherance of